1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

Except for this road, there are only single file tracks leading from village to village or to the taro gardens. Behind the villages there stretches for interminable miles the almost impenetrable tangle of large trees, small trees, shrubs, and rank undergrowth, well garnished with thorny creepers and hanging vines, which is characteristic of a tropical forest. Apart from the clearings made by the natives for planting, the only breaks in the maze of 'bush' are caused by treeless patches covered with imperata grass, often growing to a height of 3 or 4 feet. It is quite impossible to make any use of these patches as the grass overpowers everything. Even on the plantations no method has been found of eradicating it permanently. The natives burn it occasionally, but they know from experience that it is no use trying to grow anything in its place.

CLIMATE

I was not equipped for collecting meteorological data, but I made detailed notes in my diary every day as to the weather, and took readings from a thermometer (hung in the shade on my verandah) at fixed times as regularly as circumstances permitted. The result of these observations is shown in the diagrams. It will be noted that the range of variation as between the coldest and the hottest part of the day is much greater than that between the means for different months. This indicates that there is no marked change in the seasons, no period when growth is in a state of quiescence, as it is in winter in England. The trees are never bare (except the kapiok, which is an importation), but a few leaves are always falling while at the same time fresh buds appear. Instead of autumn tints there is always a touch of red or yellow in the breadfruit trees where some enormous leaf is ready to fall, making a patch of vivid colour in the midst of a mass of green. It follows that the people continue their daily round of hunting, fishing, cultivation of gardens, house- and canoe-building in much the same manner throughout the little-changing year, having no such well-marked cycle of activities as characterizes the lives of those living in countries with pronounced seasonal differences.

As can be deduced from their situation, the Solomon Islands have a tropical climate with a heavy rainfall. The rain usually comes in sharp bursts, often in the afternoon after a bright morning, and clears away rapidly. There may be several days with only a slight shower or two, but after such a period will come a